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## Australia to use DAB+ for digital radio rollout

Commercial radio broadcasters today announced they will adopt the new DAB+ standard for the implementation of digital radio in Australia. DAB+ is the new standard for the Eureka 147 platform using advanced audio codec (AAC+). It was officially approved by international standards body ETSI in February.

The chief executive officer of industry body Commercial Radio Australia, Joan Warner, said DAB+ would provide a better digital radio experience for listeners.

“We have been very active in supporting the international development of DAB+ because it means Australia will be able to adopt the latest, most spectrum efficient technology in the world for the roll out of our digital radio services,” Ms Warner said.

DAB+ is two to three times more efficient than the original Eureka 147 standard which uses the MPEG Audio Layer II coding. This means radio stations will have more choice in how they use their allocated bandwidth.

“DAB+ offers much more efficient compression, which means more stations can be broadcast on a multiplex, resulting in lower per station transmission costs,” Ms Warner said.

“It also means each broadcaster will now have the ability to deliver either superior audio quality, split their signal to offer two or three audio channels, or broadcast a combination of better than FM quality sound plus lots of associated data such as text or images. Whichever way stations choose to implement digital radio, the result will be a better service for listeners and advertisers.”

Ms Warner said commercial radio was continuing to work with the ABC and SBS Radio to test the DAB+ standard in Australia and to ensure there will be no transmission or other technical issues. The industry is also working with overseas broadcasters and receiver and chip manufacturers on the development of new DAB+ receivers.

DAB+ services and receivers are expected to be rolled out in a number of countries where digital radio is currently in trial phase, which potentially includes the Netherlands, Malta, New Zealand, India and China.

“We want to encourage the availability of a wide range of affordable digital radio receivers with new features such as picture capability,” Ms Warner said. “Some leading manufacturers have told us that they expect to start shipping DAB+ radios later this year.”

The Federal Government is currently drafting digital radio legislation and has set a launch date of 1 January 2009 for the launch of digital radio services in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and Hobart. The commercial radio industry is planning for a phased rollout across the rest of Australia to follow.

For more information about digital radio, visit [www.digitalradioaustralia.com.au](http://www.digitalradioaustralia.com.au).

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